

Powder Point Bridge

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Powder Point Bridge In Need of Repair

By SUSANNA SHEEHAN

Selectmen told the Duxbury Beach Committee they are in favor of funding a town meeting warrant article for repairing the 11-year-old Powder Point Bridge; however, they said they needed more information and an estimate on the cost of those repairs.

In a presentation to selectmen Monday night, the town's Beach Committee asked selectmen for their support of two resolutions. The first was to establish a FY2000 capital budget line item for \$12,000 for the cost of an engineering inspection of the bridge and the beach access ramp. The second was to fund a town meeting warrant article for \$50,000 for any potential repairs that may be recommended in the inspection.

A recent state inspection of the bridge found the \$3 million wooden bridge was, in places, rotting, eroding, and splintering and had warped boards, a loose plank and settlement. The report prompted the Beach Committee to make its recommendations.

"The committee feels that an inspection is appropriate due to the age of the bridge, the increased traffic counts, and the recent Commonwealth of Massachusetts report on the bridge's condition. The report, while not particularly negative, does suggest that some deterioration is occurring," stated the committee's resolution.

While selectmen agreed that some money should be spent to maintain and make minor repairs on the bridge, Selectmen Chairman Andre Martecchini did not think a separate \$12,000 inspection was needed when the state Mass. Highways bridge engineers had just inspected it. Martecchini is a structural engineer for Mass. Highways, and he said the report on the bridge was "a good rating." He said he also has a lot of experience with the African hardwood that makes up the Powder Point Bridge because he used it in the South St. Seaport project in New York City on which he worked.

Kay Foster of the Beach Committee said that an independent inspection of the bridge was recommended by Department of Public Works Director Walter Tonaszuck and that the committee felt that the bridge's situation was unique — using the African hardwood in saltwater.

Selectman John Tuffy thought that one town meeting article for \$30,000 to \$40,000 for both inspection and repairs would be better than a capital budget item and a separate warrant article.

"If our goal is to repair the bridge, we may want to have

one separate article to combine the two (inspection and repair)," said Tuffy.

Martecchini said he will try to access the entire state report on the bridge and try to come up with an estimate for the costs of the repairs, "or otherwise the bridge will deteriorate," he added.

"It's been 11 years now. It's time to do some maintenance," he said.

In other business, selectmen were told by Town Manager Rocco Longo that the RFQ for the North Hill Golf Course management contract and new clubhouse was awarded to Johnson Turf and Golf who bid \$1,010,000. The only other bid, by Golf Course Turf Management for \$938,000, was "not classified as advantageous" to the town, said Longo.

He added that the bids for the public restrooms at the town pier all came in too high, between \$60,000-\$70,000 and that project will have to be rebid. The town budgeted approximately \$45,000 for one male and one female handicapped restroom facility. Longo said the town will make a modification to the foundation in its project proposal before putting it out to be rebid.